

# Recommended Qualifications and Guidelines for Use of Translators (non-ASL) for the 2016 Michigan Assessments



The *Michigan Supports and Accommodations Table* provides information regarding the allowable second language supports for many students. This document is intended to help districts in selecting highly qualified translators to administer the Michigan assessments.

Below is a list of available supports related to the use of interpreters and translators:

## ***M-STEP***

*Math:* Directions and items may be translated. Students needing a Spanish form of the assessment (even if someone is orally translating into Spanish) should order the Spanish test booklet or have the Spanish form turned “On” in eDirect. Students requiring oral translations by a human reader of the online Spanish form must be administered the assessment individually. Usage of the Spanish form of the assessment can allow translators to use the translations as their reader script.

*ELA:* Directions only may be translated (general test orientation directions, no content related to test items themselves may be translated)

*Science:* Directions and items may be translated. Students needing a Spanish or Arabic form of the assessment should order the Spanish or Arabic DVD. Translators must use the Reader Script for the oral translation.

*Social Studies:* Directions and items may be translated. Students needing a Spanish or Arabic form of the assessment should order the Spanish or Arabic DVD. Translators must use the Reader Script for the oral translation.

## ***SAT***

*Math:* Directions may be translated into a second language used by the students. Directions cannot be elaborated upon.

The content and questions of the mathematics section may also be translated into the student's most familiar language. Students receiving a translation should be administered the test individually or may have the assessment administered in small groups of no more than 5 students if all students are receiving the same language of translation.

### ***MI-Access Functional Independence***

Only items or portions of items designated as “readable” may be translated. Refer to the Do Not Read Aloud tables for each content area.

Math: Directions and items may be translated.

ELA: Directions only may be translated.

Science: Directions and items may be translated.

Social Studies: Directions and items may be translated.

### ***WIDA***

WIDA assessments (W-APT, ACCESS for ELLs 2.0, Alternate ACCESS for ELLs) directions and content **MUST NOT** be translated.

### ***ACT Workkeys***

Please refer to the Supports and Accommodations Table for more information on appropriate content areas and assessment parts that may be translated for these assessments. However, these recommended guidelines may be followed for use with those appropriate sections and parts.

**ALL students using this support type must have this bubbled on their answer document or identified as a support that was used within eDIRECT.**

### **Recommended Qualifications for Translators and Language Interpreters (non-American Sign Language)**

Preference should be given to individuals with Bachelor's degrees in languages other than English or who hold a formal certification in either translation or interpretation. When this is not possible, interpreters should have the following qualifications:

1. Mastery of the target language and dialect
2. Familiarity with both American culture and the culture of the target language
3. Extensive general and academic vocabulary in both languages
4. Ability to express thoughts clearly and concisely in both languages
5. Familiarity with the Michigan education system
6. Attendance at school/district/statewide trainings regarding how to administer the assessments
7. Signature of the OSA Security Compliance form

Individuals selected as interpreters must also adhere to all aspects of Michigan's test security guidelines.

### **Guidelines for Translators and Language Interpretation (non-ASL)**

- Test directions, questions, and answer choices should be read to students using direct interpretation. Care should be taken not to alter the intended meaning of the text.

## Common False Assumptions and Risks

1. *Many people incorrectly assume that a bilingual person can also be an effective interpreter by virtue of knowing two languages.*

Research shows that bilingual individuals who have not received interpreter-specific training are more likely to add or omit information, as well as interject their own opinions and assumptions, which all has the result of changing the actual content of the assessment. They may also speak too quickly, making the content too difficult to process. These actions would affect the validity of the student's assessment results.

2. *Parents for the student and family members of the students are the best choice to help administer the assessment.*

Using interpreters or translators with whom the student has familiar relationships may pose a risk in creating a situation where the translator or interpreter is more willing to provide additional, non-authorized help to the student for the test.

Often times in districts where there is a low population of language-speaking students, districts may believe it would be acceptable to use a student's older sibling to aid in the translation process. This would actually result in a security breach as no students should be involved in the testing of other students.

3. *Side conversations*

It is possible that due to the one-on-one nature of this testing scenario for students, coupled with the potential relief some students may feel by having someone speak to them in their native language, additional topics may arise for discussion between the student and the interpreter. Although it is acceptable for the student to ask for clarification on directions, other non-test related topics should be avoided.

## References

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Bridging the Gap: A Basic Training for Medical Interpreters. Interpreter's Handbook, Third Edition, Jan. 1999.

ITC Guidelines for Translating and Adapting Tests, International Test Commission, Jul. 2005.

Medical Interpreter Training. Arlington Free Clinic, Arlington, VA, Jan., 2000.

National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) Interpretation Guidelines, Center for Disease Control (CDC), Nov. 2006.

Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, National Council on Measurement in Education, 2014.